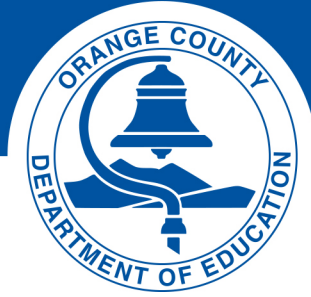


NEWS RELEASE

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Outstanding workers honored as 2016 Classified School Employees of the Year *Six county finalists to be recognized at the Orange County Board of Education meeting*

COSTA MESA, Calif., APRIL 5, 2016 – The Orange County finalists in the ninth annual Classified School Employees of the Year program will be recognized during a special ceremony set to start at 11:30 a.m. during the Orange County Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, April 6.

Established in 2008 by the California Department of Education, the CSEY program annually highlights the contributions of employees who have performed exceptionally in support of public school students, from preschool through grade 12. Classified workers with a minimum of five years of service are eligible for the recognition, whether they serve at traditional schools, charter schools, district offices or county offices of education.

"Each and every day, our classified employees perform essential services that support and enable learning at all levels," said Orange County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Al Mijares. "These six staff members in particular have distinguished themselves with passion, integrity and ingenuity, contributing directly to the health, safety and academic success of our students. On behalf of the Orange County Department of Education, I am extremely proud to celebrate their achievements and their inspiring commitment to our schools."

The 2016 Orange County Classified School Employees of the Year are:

- **Efren Barrera** – Maintenance, Operations and Facilities – College View Elementary School – Ocean View School District
- **Veronica Chapple** – Child Nutrition Services – Willmore Elementary School – Westminster School District
- **Kyle Coates** – Support Services and Security – Olinda Child Development Center – Brea Olinda Unified School District
- **Denise Yota** – Para-Educator and Instructional Assistance – Castille and Wagon Wheel elementary schools and Carl Hankey K-8 School – Capistrano Unified School District
- **Lucia Tammy Mesi** – Transportation – District Office – Anaheim Elementary School District
- **Mary McAfee** – Office and Technical Services – Huntington Seacliff Elementary School – Huntington Beach City School District

A committee consisting of community representatives and educators annually selects Classified Employees of the Year in the areas of child nutrition services; maintenance, operations and facilities; transportation; para-educator and instructional assistance; office and technical services; and support services and security.

A total of 57 employees were nominated in Orange County, and judges evaluated each application based on a state-selection criteria organized around four themes – work performance, school and community involvement, leadership and commitment, and actions that go above and beyond.

OCDE and SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union join in honoring the 2016 Classified School Employees of the Year. Each of the finalists will receive a \$500 award from SchoolsFirst. In addition, a full-page advertisement recognizing the finalists and nominees will run in the Orange County Register. The six finalists will represent Orange County in the state-level competition.

The April 6 Board of Education meeting will be held at the Orange County Department of Education's main campus at 200 Kalmus Drive in Costa Mesa.

More information on the finalists will be available at the [OCDE Newsroom](#).

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